
UNPROVENANCED MATERIAL CULTURE AND FREUD'S COLLECTION OF ANTIQUITIES

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Abstract

Over his long life Sigmund Freud collected at least 2500 antiquities, most of which are now on view to the public in the London Freud Museum. What has not previously been properly considered is to what degree Freud was archaeologically informed, and why he became involved in the 'excavation' of Duna-Pentele in modern Hungary. Much has been written (not least by psychoanalysts) on the possible symbolic significance both of his collecting and of what he collected. It is at least arguable that his purchasing of antiquities was more to do with his mood at any particular time, and what was available on the market. Over time, items in Freud's collection have been ascribed different significances by Freud himself, and by others. The changing nature of assessments of the significance of material culture should be kept in mind when confronted by some of today's politically correct stances.

Key Words ◆ Antiquities ◆ Collecting ◆ Freud

My first glimpses of an extinct civilization [were] to bring me as much consolation as anything else in the struggles of life. (Freud, [1914] 1968: 241)¹

But no one had told me that [t]his room was lined with treasures. I was to greet the Old Man of the Sea, but no one had told me of the treasures he had salvaged from the sea-depth. He is at home here. He is part and parcel of these treasures. (H.D., 1985: 97)

Man never comes so close to being the master of a secret seraglio as when he is surrounded by his objects. (Baudrillard, 1996: 88)

We can learn a great deal about Freud's psychic makeup, and by extension our own, by looking closely at Freud's collection and the strategies that amassed it. (Barker, 1996: xx)

People like Sigmund Freud . . . whose vocation sends them across the confines of the reasonable and the acceptable . . . Such collectors emerge alongside Noah, at the margin of the human adventure, that pivotal point where man finds himself rivalling God and teeters between mastery and madness. (Elsner and Cardinal, 1994: 6)

. . . [My] little statues and images help . . . stabilize the evanescent idea, or keep it from escaping altogether. (Freud 20/3/33, as reported in H.D., 1985: 175)

A collector does not give his best piece away, but he is ashamed to give his worst. (Freud to Albrecht Schaffer 21/6/39, quoted in Molnar, 1992: 296)

INTRODUCTION

A recent aside by Ascherson (2000: 98) has brought Sigmund Freud's early 20th-century archaeological activities hard up against some central discussions of the ethics of archaeology of the 21st century. Ascherson's comments were stimulated by a review by Harmat (1994) of a book of translated correspondence between Freud and Sándor Ferenczi (Brabant et al., 1992) which reveals Freud (as well as his friend Ferenczi) to be what Ascherson calls a 'shameless patron of tomb-robbers' making use of 'a petty crook' to gain genuine antiquities from Hungary for his collection, those same activities which led Harmat (1994: 190) to call Freud an 'art smuggler'.

This correspondence illuminates the little which has previously been published about this particular episode in the extensive and long-lived plundering of the Roman cemeteries and military fort at Duna-Pentele, formerly Intercisa (2nd–4th Centuries AD), today's Dunaújváros (e.g. see Vágó and Bóna, 1976: 125–6; Fülep, 1980 for the history of archaeology at the site; and Jones, 1955: 425; Jobst, 1978: 48; Gamwell, 1989: 29–30, note 14; Corcoran, 1991: 21 for the present episode).²

So much has been published about Freud and his collecting of antiquities (e.g. Gamwell, 1989; Gay, 1989; Kuspit, 1989; Pearce, 1992: 73–5; Forrester, 1994; D'Agata, 1994; Davies et al., 1998; Marinelli, 1998: 18) that it might appear superfluous to add to this corpus, but several aspects of particular archaeological interest do not appear to have been sufficiently appreciated. Additionally, the whole 'story' of Freud's collecting and collection should allow further exploration of the nature of

material culture objects and 'meaning' once they have become part of collections.

FREUD AND HIS ARCHAEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPECTATIONS

BACKGROUND READING

It is by now well known (e.g. Bernfeld, 1951; Jones, 1957: 320; Spector, 1972: 9, 84; Gay, 1976: 18, 20; Bowie, 1983: 60–2; Gay, 1988: 172; Gamwell, 1989: 24; Kuspit, 1989; Forrester, 1994: 226–7; Barker, 1996: xi; Reinhard, 1996), that Freud made extensive use of archaeological terminology, metaphor and analogies (e.g. Freud, [1907] 1987: 76; Freud, [1927] 1987: 196–97, 216). Many of these are striking (e.g. Freud, [1907] 1987: 42, 65, 65 note 1; Freud, [1909] 1979: 57) as are his suggested parallels between actual methods and practices of archaeology and psychoanalysis (e.g. Freud, [1937] 1964: 259–60 and see Bernfeld, 1951: 108; Jobst, 1978: 46; Gamwell, 1989: 28; and Roth, 1995 for a critique). Sometimes archaeologists even appear as the main character in a story (Freud, [1907] 1987; Jobst, 1978: 47; Gay, 1976: 22–4; Gay, 1988: 320–1; Timms, 1988: 74–5; Bergmann, 1989: 176–7; Marinelli, 1998: 14), or the reader is offered a putative archaeological-type reaction to events (Freud, [1907] 1987: 116). What has not been much discussed, and is much more controversial, is how far Freud was himself aware of archaeological subtleties. As has already been recognized by some (e.g. Botting and Davies, 1989), we know from the (often annotated) contents of Freud's library (Spector, 1972: 9; Davies et al., 1998: 90–101; and see Timms, 1988 for the circumstances of the library taken to London), as well as from his published references to archaeological discoveries, that his archaeological knowledge was considerable (see e.g. Jobst, 1978: 46; Gay, 1988: 171; Botting and Davies, 1989; Gamwell, 1989: 22; Clayton, 1990: 35; D'Agata, 1994: 15–9; but cf. Corcoran, 1991: 21). Thus, at least by the time of his *Totem and Taboo* (1913), Freud had read and digested Lubbock's (1865) *Prehistoric Times* and (1870) *The Origins of Civilization* (Freud, [1913] 1986: 66) which differentiated between geological versus archaeological time, and had divided the Palaeolithic from the Neolithic from the Bronze and Iron Ages, dating the Palaeolithic to between 240,000–10,000 years ago. So, the occasional archaeological analogy is not only striking: 'With neurotics it is as though we were in a prehistoric landscape – for instance, in the Jurassic' (Freud, [1941] 1964: 299), but can be assumed also to be archaeologically informed. Freud clearly had a fascination for all periods of prehistory (Jones, 1953: 363; and see Botting and Davies, 1989: 185); thus he was well aware of predynastic Egypt and owned Capart's (1905) *Primitive Art in Egypt* in both English

and French (Botting and Davies, 1989: 189). He was particularly excited by Evans' excavations at Knossos even in the period before 1903, asking in a letter early in July 1901 (Masson, 1985: 445) – by which time Evans (1901) had already identified and published on the Neolithic of Crete, with its attendant 'Mother Goddess' figurines – 'Have you read that the English excavated an old palace in Crete (Knossos), which they declare to be the real labyrinth of Minos?' (and see Freud, [1939] 1986: 286n). He also possessed copies of the *Annual of the British School of Archaeology at Athens* for 1899–1900, and Burrows' (1907) *The Discoveries in Crete* which emphasized the importance of the Neolithic beginnings at Knossos (which Burrows compared both to Troy and to predynastic Egypt), c.12,000–10,000 BC (and see in particular D'Agata, 1994: 14–6).

Freud himself was explicitly devoted to the study of 'the science of' archaeology and prehistory (e.g. Freud, [1907] 1987: 76). It is also clear from his publications that he saw himself as *doing* prehistory, although there is no evidence that he ever participated in an excavation. There is little doubt, however (e.g. Freud, [1907] 1987: 40; and see Jones, 1953: 30; Jones, 1957: 209–11; Schur, 1972: 247; Ransohoff, 1976: 65, plate 30), that Freud wished that he *could* have satisfied his 'avocation' (Bernfeld, 1951; Bettelheim, 1983: 42; D'Agata, 1994: 18, note 58), and it is documented that he visited archaeological sites as often as he could (e.g. M. Freud, 1983: 137; Davies et al., 1998: 51, photo).

PREHISTORY: ARCHAEOLOGY VERSUS ETHNOLOGY

It is important at this point to note a distinction between 'archaeology' and 'prehistory'/'ethnology'. In Freud's time, and well in to the 1930s, the apparent success of doing prehistory with no accompanying archaeology was seen to be so great that it led to the presumption that excavation was entirely secondary to ethnology in the aims of understanding the past. Living non-literate human societies were taken to be exemplars of past, prehistoric, cultures (e.g. Freud, [1915] 1987: 84). According to this view, the 'primitive' of 'elsewhere' represented some previous, somehow 'blocked' or 'recapitulating', 'survival' (Freud, [1939] 1986: 318) stage of prehistoric development (and see Bergmann, 1989: 180–1). As Freud put it in *Totem and Taboo* (Freud, [1913] 1986: 53; and see e.g. Freud, [1910] 1987: 174; Freud, [1918] 1979: 338):

Prehistoric man, in the various stages of his development, is known to us through the inanimate monuments and implements which he has left behind . . . But apart from this, in a certain sense he is still our contemporary. There are men still living who . . . stand very near to primitive man . . . and whom we therefore regard as his direct heirs and representatives. Such is our view of those whom we describe as savages or half-savages; and their

mental life must have a peculiar interest for us if we are right in seeing in it a well-preserved picture of an early stage of our own development.

If that supposition is correct, a comparison between the psychology of primitive peoples, as it is taught by social anthropology, and the psychology of neurotics, as it has been revealed by psychoanalysis, will be bound to show numerous points of agreement and will throw new light upon familiar facts in both sciences.

It was not only Freud as a psychoanalyst who clung to such (already then) largely discredited and rejected approaches (e.g. Freud, [1930] 1972: 5–9; Freud, [1939] 1986: 344–5; and see Wortis, 1940: 847); so, for example, Frazer's Cambridge lecture of 1921 (Frazer, 1922) on *The Scope and Method of Mental Anthropology* – a term which Frazer suggested should supersede that of social anthropology – still argued for recapitulation as a main approach to interpretation (and therefore the equation of the savage and child mind). Without once mentioning Freud by name, Frazer also recommended the relevance to anthropology of the 'study of mental pathology . . . the wild fancies of patients in asylums sometimes resembl[ing] the superstitious notions of savages' (Frazer, 1922: 587). Whether or not Frazer had been influenced in this apparent about-turn in his approach to anthropology by Marett – who had published (Marett, 1920: 128) supportive comments about Freud's analysis of 'survivals' – is not yet clear. Frazer is dismissive about what he refers to as the 'branch of the science of man which is known as prehistoric archaeology or prehistoric anthropology', claiming it deals with 'the meagre remains of their mouldering bones and . . . the somewhat more abundant remains of their handiwork' (Frazer, 1922: 587), and contrasts this with the comparative approach to living ' . . . savage or barbarous peoples, whom I cannot but regard as furnishing us with by far the amplest and most trustworthy materials for tracing the mental and social evolution of our species backward into regions which lie beyond the purview of history' (Frazer, 1922: 588).

As Ackerman (1987: 47) has put it:

. . . since they were dealing with preliterate societies, which by definition had no records to illustrate the local version of the universal and inexorable march of the growth of Mind, artifacts and items of behaviour from evolutionary sequences all round the world were pressed into service to supply the dynamic element needed to move from one 'stage' to the next, and thus to fill in the many missing rungs on the developmental ladder.

To put it another way, what Freud had been doing in 'out-Frazering' *The Golden Bough* was to 'weave from . . . secondary and tertiary sources an imaginative fabric seductive enough to make the seeking out of facts in field-work or in clinical observation seem miserable and intrusive

pedantry' (Bowie, 1983: 55). So, for Freud ([1911] 1979: 222–3; and [1918] 1979: 337):

The time will soon be ripe . . . to complete . . . what has hitherto had only an individual and ontogenic application by the addition of its anthropological counterpart, which is to be conceived phylogenetically. 'In dreams and in neuroses . . . we come . . . upon the *child* . . . And we come upon the *savage* too', we may now add, 'upon the *primitive* man, as he stands revealed to us in the light of the researches of archaeology and of ethnology'.

Yet, in fact, Freud could be much more sophisticated in his argument about those such as the Australian Aborigines whom he called the 'most backward and miserable of savages' (Freud, [1913] 1986: 54). He (Freud, [1913] 1986: 56, note 2; see also Freud, [1913] 1986: 161–2, note 1 cont.; Bowie, 1983: 54–60) stressed that:

It must not be forgotten that even the most primitive and conservative races are in some sense *ancient* races and have a long past history behind them during which their original conditions of life have been subject to much development and distortion . . . The difficulty . . . is to decide whether we should regard the present state of things as a true picture of the significant features of the past or as a secondary distortion of them.

'PSYCHO-HISTORY' OR SOMETHING NEW

Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly difficult for today's prehistorians and archaeologists to accept that Freud really had a sophisticated archaeological appreciation of, for example, the invention of the control of fire, if all they have read of Freud is his claim (Freud, [1932] 1986: 229; and see Freud, [1930] 1972: 27, note 1):

that, in order to gain control over fire, men had to renounce the homosexually-tinged desire to put it out with a stream of urine – [and that such a claim] can be confirmed by an interpretation of the Greek myth of Prometheus . . .

It is easy for today's professionals to dismiss this kind of psycho-history as both palpably absurd and essentially '*non-archaeological*' in nature. Despite this, Freud sometimes claimed in detail that an event such as the Oedipal primal crime had indeed occurred, and was *not* simply a mental construction (Jones, 1953: 161–3, 175–6, 181–3, 188–9; and see Rieff, 1960: 198–204 for a useful discussion of 'Freud's social essays stand[ing], even after their anthropological shorings have buckled beneath them'). At other times (e.g. Freud, [1921] 1987: 154) he adopted what can appear to be a somewhat whimsical view of archaeology, as when he likens his Oedipus/Totemic explanation of the development of human society to all archaeological enquiry, to be simply seen as: '. . . a

hypothesis, like so many others, with which archaeologists endeavour to lighten the darkness of prehistoric times – a “Just-So Story” . . .’

He could be equally disarmingly frank and critical of himself and of his own hypotheses (e.g. Freud, [1900] 1985: 606–7; Freud, [1927] 1987: 203), such as on 17 November 1937 when writing to Stefan Zweig (Jones, 1957: 230; Zweig, 1989: 175): ‘. . . I have assuredly not dug up more than a fragment of truth’.

Occasionally, Freud could also sound very ‘modern’ in his approach to the past, for example when writing of history in ancient times: ‘People’s motive for writing history was not objective curiosity but a desire to influence their contemporaries, to encourage and inspire them, or to hold a mirror up before them’ (Freud, [1910] 1987: 173–4). At other times he could pose astutely discerning questions (e.g. Freud, [1927] 1987: 230): ‘Can an anthropologist give the cranial index of a people whose custom it is to deform their children’s heads by bandaging them round from their earliest years?’ However, it is an oft-forgotten passage which best reflects Freud’s understanding of archaeological investigation (Freud, [1937] 1964: 259; and see Bowie, 1983: 61):

One of the most ticklish problems that confronts the archaeologist is notoriously the determination of the relative age of his finds; and if an object makes its appearance in some particular level, it often remains to be decided whether it belongs to that level or whether it was carried down to that level owing to some subsequent disturbance.

How indeed committed Freud was to archaeology and Egyptology can perhaps be apprehended best through an ‘experience’ once allegedly recounted by Freud to Theodor Reik (Reik, 1949: 128):

At one time a well-known Egyptologist³ who had taken an important part in the excavations in the Nile Valley came to Freud as a patient. The analysis progressed satisfactorily until Freud, as he later told me, had to recognize the fact that he was much too fascinated by this patient, who could tell him so much about archaeological work. Freud felt that his personal interest was so strong that it disturbed his analytical work. His professional integrity demanded that he send the patient to another analyst less keenly interested in Egyptology.

FREUD’S USE OF HIS ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTING AND READING

In marked contrast to the expertise which he commanded regarding the dating of *historical* events in ancient Egyptian, Near Eastern (e.g. Freud, 1939 (1986: 258, 267, 302–33; and see Rice, 1999) and Classical times (e.g. Freud, [1900] 1985: 171, note 2; Freud, [1939] 1986: 269, note 1), Freud almost always avoided specificity when talking about prehistory: ‘in the

primaeval days of the human race' (Freud, [1910] 1987: 188), 'primaeval antiquity' (Freud, [1913] 1986: 85), 'prehistory of the primal family . . . primaeval custom' (Freud, [1940] 1986: 425, note 1), 'through the course of ages' (Freud, [1913] 1986: 122), 'prehistoric epoch of the human species as a whole' (Freud, [1925a] 1986: 272), 'in the earliest times' (Freud, [1913] 1986: 199), 'earlier times' (Freud, [1913] 1986: 122), 'every sign of extreme antiquity' (Freud, [1913] 1986: 200), 'primal horde epoch of mankind's development . . .' (Freud, [1925b] 1986: 253), and so on. Such avoidance of dates is sometimes very striking – from the very remote geological Ice Age time periods, lower Palaeolithic hand axes, upper Palaeolithic art, to the various Neolithic and later cultures about which he had read. Thus, for example, Freud ([1913] 1986: 135, 149, note 1) based much of his own discussions about sorcery, magic and animism on Reinach's publications ('1905–12'); although Reinach had dated French upper Palaeolithic art works, Freud chose to talk about them and totemism *a-temporally* – all the stranger since, elsewhere, he (Freud, [1913] 1986: 167) stressed that: 'Any satisfactory explanation [of totemism] should be at once a historical and a psychological one'.

Indeed, it is only with extreme difficulty – by collating all his scattered remarks – that it is possible to begin to determine the relative sequence of his proposed prehistoric events. Social and intellectual development appears to start from the point that bipedalism began (nowadays believed to have been c. 3.7 million years ago) after, and as a result of which, followed the development of speech (nowadays believed to have taken place c. 1.6 million years ago or – depending on what particular current theory one chooses to follow – c. 100,000 years ago in Africa), a development which he saw as leading not only to 'pride' (Freud, [1939] 1986: 360) in this particular achievement, but on to a 'new realm of intellectuality . . . [which] was unquestionably one of the most important stages on the path to hominization' – 'the process of becoming human' – (Freud, [1939] 1986: 318, note 1, 360). Thereafter, and 'not advanced far in the development of speech' (Freud, [1939] 1986: 324), came the (Darwin-derived) original patriarchal horde(s) – about which Freud explicitly states at one point: 'No date can be assigned to this, nor has it been synchronized with the geological epochs known to us . . .' (Freud, [1939] 1986: 324). At some time also unspecified, speech became language (if Freud was indeed intending to distinguish between these two phenomena), accompanied by ubiquitous symbolism, and the scene is now truly set for development towards intellectualism (perhaps what today we call the upper Palaeolithic). After what Freud claims would have been a long time of planning and plucking up courage, the father is then killed by his sons (Freud, [1913] 1986: 203), the courage deriving from the first invention of weapons (and see Freud, [1933] 1987: 350–1). The following stage, or stages (today's Palaeolithic or possibly

Mesolithic), is (or are) both long-lived (Freud, [1939] 1986: 325), and complex: including the incest taboo, a prohibition which must have been older than the domestication of animals (Freud, [1913] 1986: 184, 197–8), the repentance by the sons – with the renouncing of their rights in favour of a possible matriarchal stage (Freud, [1913] 1986: 206, 211; Freud, [1939] 1986: 326) – and the development of totemism, the first true human religion (Freud, [1939] 1986: 326), which was brought to a close by the domestication of animals and the introduction of cattle breeding (Freud, [1913] 1986: 197). But it was with the subsequent reversion to patriarchy and male deities – ‘under the influence of external factors . . . which are also in part insufficiently known . . .’ (Freud, [1939] 1986: 360–1) and which only came about after a lengthy period of ‘longing for’ the slaughtered father (Freud, [1913] 1986: 210), and a significant shift in social relations and ‘mental estrangement from animals’ (Freud, [1913] 1986: 210) – that the great step forward to civilization took place (perhaps today’s Neolithic?). From there it is not difficult to trace the chronological development in Freud’s postulates on to the Bronze Age City States of the Near East and the Aegean (Freud, [1913] 1986: 212, 214).

It turns out from a manuscript deriving from discussions with Ferenczi in 1914 and 1915 (Grubrich-Simitis, 1987), that in fact Freud was indeed capable of thinking ‘phylogenetically’ (?= prehistoric ‘archaic heritage’, Freud, [1939] 1986: 343), although his dating was still primarily by events rather than by chronology (and see Freud, [1940] 1986: 425, note 1). In this unpublished scheme (it is still not known why, by the end of the war in 1918, Freud had decided against publication of this work (see Sachs, 1945: 97–8; Grubrich-Simitis, 1998: 29–30), Freud saw the original human animal living within a plentiful and unstressful environment until privations set in as a result of the encroaching Ice Age(s) – the new perils being equatable to ‘anxiety hysteria’. During the succeeding hard times, each individual was caught up in the conflict between self-preservation and the urge to procreate, this stage – being equatable with ‘conversion hysteria’ – was still *before* ‘humans’ had any speech. The next period of restricted sex led to the growth of intelligent enquiry into the nature of the hostile surrounding world, the development of language, innovation, male domination of females and the belief in animism (in Freud, [1913] 1986: 148) said to correspond to ‘narcissism’) and magic. Towards the end of this period Freud postulated individual hordes dominated by fathers/males (and possibly already totemism?), equatable with ‘obsessional neurosis’. After the end of the Ice Age(s), the sons who had not been castrated by their father were driven out of the horde territory at puberty, a stage equatable with *dementia praecox* – with the result that they lived together as a fratriclan (with possible homosexual developments) – a long period of planning, equatable with ‘paranoia’. Eventually they overpowered and killed the

father and then suffered remorse accompanied by mourning: the end of the horde system, equatable with 'melancholia-mania'.

Freud ([1913] 1986: 204, note 2 cont.) himself offered what may appear to be a singularly unhelpful comment on the absence of much time-based evidence in his work:

The lack of precision in what I have written . . . its abbreviation of the time factor and its compression of the whole subject-matter, may be attributed to the reserve necessitated by the nature of the topic. It would be as foolish to aim at exactitude in such questions as it would be unfair to insist upon certainty.

One possibility which could be advanced to explain why Freud to all intents and purposes ignored the dating evidence available to him is that this evidence – particularly as it was associated with the heterogeneous nature of the carvings of the Palaeolithic and the excavated figurines of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages (even then known to include representations of males as well as females – see Ucko, 1968: 443; and see Reeves and Ueno, 1996: 22 fig. 5, 41 fig. 39) – did not fit his grander scheme of the Mother Goddess and matriarchy (or matriarchies). In addition, whereas Freud had worked out in detail the social and historical role of the father and the male in human social evolution, the social role of women in the original horde remained obscure, and consequently difficult to personalize or deify.

An alternative, or additional, hypothesis would be that Freud had to eschew dating evidence in order to allow himself the freedom to carry out his unique sweeping review of human mental, conceptual and behavioural 'primal fantasies' (Grubrich-Simitis, 1998: 28; and see Roth, 1995). Certainly, it sometimes appears that he found difficulty in conceiving the depth of the timescales concerned in his analyses (Freud, [1913] 1986: 192). For example, when discussing the possible 13th or 14th century BC date for Moses, he (Freud, [1939] 1986: 243) adds the remark: 'from such remote times that we cannot evade [the question] whether he was a historical personage or a creation of legend'. However, as already noted, it was about sweeping conclusions that Freud could be at his most realistic; for example, ' . . . the derivations which I have proposed in these pages do not in the least overlook the complexity of the phenomena under review. All that they claim is to have added a new factor to the sources . . . of religion, morality and society . . . ' (Freud, [1913] 1986: 220, note 2); or, 'It is no doubt too early to decide how far the conclusions thus reached will be able to stand criticism' (Freud, [1914] 1986: 96).

A further possibility is that Freud was unable to confront the real implications which were beginning to be derived from the archaeological evidence – namely that the 'stages' of development which he considered so decisive for the understanding of the development of human

culture (and see Forrester, 1994: 226) had occurred time and time again in many different parts of the world, under a great variety of different ecological and social conditions. It is clear in his only discussion of the historicity of the 'Oedipal' episode that Freud was indeed aware of this problem; he wrote that 'the events . . . occurred to all primitive men – that is, to all our ancestors . . . [It did not happen] on a single occasion, [but] in fact it covered thousands of years and was repeated countless times during that long period' (Freud, [1939] 1986: 324). But – aware or not – he did not really confront the problem, remarking only that the period (of small hordes with rudimentary speech and dominated by a powerful male) cannot be dated (Freud, [1939] 1986: 324).

As can be seen, therefore, the available evidence from archaeological enquiry was all but ignored by Freud, or at least appears to have been compartmentalized separately from the evidence of the past supposedly revealed by ethnology – despite it being an ethnology embedded in 'biogenetic-Lamarckian concepts' and 'recapitulation' theory. Yet Freud possessed a collection of 2000 antiquities (sometimes claimed as 'some 1900' (e.g. Pearce, 1992: 73), and sometimes as '3000–4000' (e.g. Belk and Walendorf, 1994: 242), which, in the end, he signalled out in his will (together with his books on psychology and psychoanalysis) to go to his beloved daughter Anna (Gay, 1988: 612, note; and see Jones, 1957: 239; Molnar, 1992: 243). Roazen (1991) and Rizzuto (1998: 22) record that Freud's will refers to a catalogue of his antiquities, a catalogue whose nature and whereabouts are not known.

FREUD'S COLLECTION AND HIS ATTITUDES TO ANTIQUITIES

It was not only about archaeological practice and Egyptological results that Freud could so often appear well informed (see e.g. D'Agata, 1994: 19). He could also have been a conservator of the 21st century! ' . . . Like a conscientious archaeologist I have not omitted to mention in each case where the authentic parts end and my construction begins' (Bernfeld, 1951: 108; Gay, 1988: 172). But this was not just theory, for Freud would also wonder about the environmental conditions which were causing cracks to develop in one of the ivory figures in his own collection (See Figure 1. See also Molnar, 1992: 114–15, 284–5, diary entry for 9/12/31), and he also took practical steps to conserve his objects (see e.g. Molnar, 1992: 86–7, 279, 5/11/30 and 20/11/30; and D'Agata, 1994: 8, for the remarkable case of the Roman sarcophagus lid frieze relief). Such an attitude to conservation gains added significance when Freud reports (1914: 122) in an apologetic letter to a friend, in his *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* about his 'latest acquisition – a small, handsome, glazed Egyptian figure – [which he] broke. Luckily . . . the figure could be so cemented

that the break would not be noticed'⁴ (Figure 2). His patient, Hilda Doolittle (H.D.), 'one of the most sensitive of his patients' (Molnar, 1992: xvii), compared Freud to a museum curator (H.D., 1985: 116).

There is evidence of considerable archaeological knowledge even in one of his dreams. For example, one of Freud's very rare published references to a particular object (which had once been) in his collection describes a specific Etruscan pottery 'type', the 'breakfast ships' which were rectangular trays of black pottery, with two handles, one end of which reminded him, as a result of his dream, of mourning, and the



FIGURE 1 Ivory figure (No. 3347). Freud wondered about the environmental conditions which were causing cracks to develop in some of his ivory figures
Photograph Stuart Laidlaw. Freud Museum, London

FIGURE 2 Faience figure of Sekhmet (No. 3808). Perhaps the figure about which Freud claimed that it had been so well cemented that it would not be noticed that it had been broken by him

Photograph Stuart Laidlaw. Freud Museum, London





FIGURE 3 Predynastic Egyptian fish-shaped slate palette (No. 3003). Usually kept on the right side of Freud's desk (and see Figure 5)
Photograph Stuart Laidlaw. Freud Museum, London

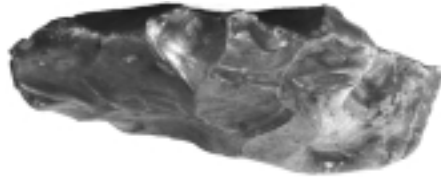


FIGURE 4 Lower Palaeolithic handaxe from the Somme Valley (No. 4503)
Photograph Freud Museum, London

other end, of a funeral ship (Freud, [1900] 1985: 202–3, 588, 600–2; Freud, [1927] 1987: 196–7).

In addition to the self-evidently representational, such as statues, several of which have by now been published (e.g. Gamwell and Wells, 1989), Freud also owned less well-known objects. These included several examples of predynastic Egyptian pots (e.g. No. 4612; Reeves and Ueno, 1996: 23 figs. 8, 9; and see Kraus, 1994: 228–9 for a bought but apparently genuine 'Decorated' example) and a predynastic Egyptian fish-shaped slate palette (Figure 3) – the predynastic period being dated by 1902 to between 10,000 and 8000 BC by Petrie at Diospolis Parva and other sites. He also possessed '2 Neolithic stone axes' (Leupold-Löwenthal et al., 1995: 197, nos 32, 33), and a lower Palaeolithic handaxe (Figure 4).

At first sight perhaps Freud's own lack of explicit mention of his collection is one of the most striking features of his published writings (and see Gamwell, 1996: 2), omitted even from his autobiographical writing (Freud, [1925] 1986), albeit 'autobiography' with the primary focus on 'his share in the development of psychologies'. However, whatever led to the exclusion of this topic did not prevent him (Freud, [1900] 1985: 258, 389) from chronicling his teenage passion for collecting books, or from referring to his activities, and interest in, plants and vegetables (artichokes, and later, mushrooms – and see Jones, 1955: 438–9). Freud's collection of antiquities (Newlands, 1988) gets almost no mention, despite the fact that in his unpublished correspondence he acknowledged not only that collecting antiquities formed part of enjoyable holidays (e.g. E. Freud, 1961: 282–3) but also that from at least 1896 (Bernfeld, 1951: 109; Gamwell, 1989: 21; Barker, 1996: vii; Gamwell, 1996: 5) he was always buying antiquities, and that his 'hobby was . . . his passion for antiquities . . . certainly his only extravagance' (Sachs,

1945: 81; Jones, 1953: 363; E. Freud, 1961: 403). There is no doubt that, to follow Baudrillard's (1996: 103) distinction, Freud was a proper collector, not just an accumulator, 'being concerned with differentiated objects which often [had] exchange value . . .'. Indeed, Freud took the business of 'differentiating' very seriously, making much use of the professional archaeologists who numbered among his friends (Davies, 1998: 98), some even acting as sources both for his collecting and for information about his collection (Molnar, 1992: 46, 56–7, 209, 221–2, 6/11/29; Marinelli, 1998: 13); it is clear that Freud enjoyed many and long discussions concerning archaeological topics (Jobst, 1978: 48; Schorske, 1993: 36; D'Agata, 1994: 7–8).

Freud's apparent reticence concerning his passion to collect (see Davies et al., 1998: 75–6), hid a collecting activity which he likened to smoking in its addicting habit – 'but less so' – (Gamwell, 1996: 2–3, 6), and one which might even have enabled him to give up smoking if only he had been able to afford to buy sufficient antiquities (Molnar, 1992: 70, 9/5/30). In the event, his collecting continued after he moved to London, as did his wish to know everything about individual pieces (Molnar, 1992: 242, 251, 305–6, 25/6/38, 29/10/38). From correspondence, and in particular from his 'chronicle' (Molnar, 1992), it is known that Freud received gifts of antiquities from a variety of sources, ranging from colleagues who knew of his interest in such things (e.g. Papini, 1973: 98), to his brother (Molnar, 1992: 198; Davies et al., 1998: 79) and especially close friends (see Jones, 1957: 258; Molnar, 1992; Davies et al., 1998: 65; Breger, 2000: 314). He also regularly bought from a variety of dealers (Gamwell, 1996: 129, note 14; Reeves, 2000/01; and see Davies et al., 1998: 74–5; and especially Gamwell, 1989: 29, note 9; Gamwell and Wells, 1989: 91; and many entries in Molnar, 1992 for further details), including Greek antiquities from a dealer in Paris, in 1899 Egyptian material from Salzburg (Jones, 1953: 363; Gay, 1988: 172), an Etruscan funerary urn from Italy (Freud, [1900] 1985: 202; Davies et al., 1998: 76), and in 1898 a Roman statuette from Innsbruck (Jones, 1953: 363; E. Freud, 1961: 238). In Vienna itself, 'once a week Freud . . . made the rounds of the city's dealers. They, in turn, would know what he was looking for and saved items for him' (Engelman, 1998: 97), and twice a month – or even twice a week (Jobst, 1978: 47) – a particular dealer came to his home to show available wares (Ransohoff, 1976: 66, photo 24). When he had to travel to the sanatorium Tegel in 1930, this allowed him 'the opportunity for six visits to the antiquities dealer, Dr Phillip Lederer' (Davies, 1998: 97). To find an object such as part of an Egyptian mummy case available for purchase, gave Freud much delight even to the extent of having to swap several of his own objects to 'pay' for it (Ransohoff, 1976: 66, photo 34; Molnar, 1992: 168, 9/3/34). It has been estimated (Bernhard-Walcher, 1998: 155) that he bought more than 200 objects

from one dealer between 1927 and 1938. On one occasion, it is known, he went out to purchase an ancient Greek vase explicitly to cheer himself up (Gamwell, 1996: 6).

That Freud was clearly well aware of the presence of forgeries on the market is reflected by his attempt, as often as he could manage, to have his intended purchases authenticated by experts such as those in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (see D'Agata, 1994: 10–11; Davies et al., 1998: 74; and Reeves, 2000/01 for further details); indeed, he kept handy in an envelope in his desk written authentications of his pieces (Freud Museum Newsletter, 1987: 1, 10; Molnar, 1992: 55, 209; D'Agata, 1994: 9–11). Despite these precautions, his collection did in fact contain several probable forgeries, deriving from a variety of sources (see e.g. Hughes, 1951: 10; Gamwell and Wells, 1989: 58, 60, 101, 127; Gamwell, 1989: 23, 30 note 17; Davies et al., 1998: 74; Reeves, 2000/01). Apparently, Freud's knowledge was not sufficient to identify such forgeries and several of them were displayed in prominent, even favoured, positions on Freud's desk and in the consulting room (Molnar, 1992: 127, 198–9, 28/6/32).

Some, such as Bettelheim (1990: 22), Pearce (1992: 74–5) and Forrester (1994: 229) have claimed that Freud's collection was well within the tradition of the 'late nineteenth-century museum culture', while D'Agata (1994: 9, note 7, 15) suggests that Freud's collecting was part of social aspirations of young Jewish professionals (but see Spector, 1975: 21; Marinelli, 1998: 9–10, 18). Although authors such as Storr (1986) have claimed that the number of items in Freud's collection was exceptional as compared with other 'Victorian bourgeois' (but see Aspropoulos, 1989: 26), Freud himself referred to it as a 'small' collection of 'antique clay and stone objects' (Freud, 1914: 120). The figure of 2000 antiquities in Freud's collection at the time of his death must be a considerable underestimation of what passed through his hands, since it is known – despite some commentators' assertions that 'collecting' involves the desire to retain (Gamwell, 1996: 4) – that Freud often gave away items from his collection to kin, friends and colleagues (Jobst, 1978: 48; Jones, 1955: 425–6; Schorske, 1993: 38; Marinelli, 1998: 9–10). A particularly charming example was his surprise gift of two small Egyptian figures given to his favourite pupil at the time, Karl Abraham, in 1907, which Freud had apparently secreted in Abraham's briefcase without him knowing (Abraham and Freud, 1965: 14). Perhaps the least understood of such gifts concerns the statue of a Buddha which he apparently gave to Gertrude Neugebauer, an employee of a removal firm, perhaps to assist the safe despatch of his collection to London in 1938 (Marinelli, 1998: 10; Scholz-Strasser, 1998: 15). He also exchanged individual pieces to get objects which he especially wanted for his collection (Forrester, 1994: 230; Bernhard-Walcher, 1998: 155). Such gifts and

transactions were in addition to his repeated giving of ancient intaglio stones set in rings to favoured supportive professional colleagues (Bertin, 1982: 179; Gamwell and Wells, 1989: 123; and see Sachs, 1945: 153; H.D., 1985: 65–7; Molnar, 1992: 45, 49–50, 98, 161, 7/11/29, 30/11/29, 11/12/29; and for the present whereabouts, and current dating, of the one given to Ferenczi, see Marinelli, 1998: 10; Dolthofer, 1998: 145, No. 81; and for that given to Ernst Simmel, see Reeves and Ueno, 1996: 54 fig. 63).

That Freud's overall interest in the past was, as already noted, at least in part also archaeological in nature is demonstrated by his many visits to museum collections of Egyptian, Near Eastern and Mediterranean antiquities in different parts of the world (e.g. see letter of 19/10/83 quoted in E. Freud et al., 1978: 121; and see Gombrich, 1966: 32; Gay, 1988: 47–8; Schorske, 1993: 38), including those in Germany (e.g. Sachs, 1945: 160–1). It is even alleged (Jones, 1955: 60; and see Jobst, 1978: 47) that the collection of Cypriot antiquities in New York (D'Agata, 1994: 16) was the main reason why Freud had reluctantly agreed to go to the States at all!

Nor is Freud's reticence as described earlier simply a matter of his having chosen not to let a private aspect of his life into the public domain, for there is no doubt that his antiquities formed part of his 'public' work-practices.

CONSULTATIONS

Despite the fact that his desk (Figures 5 and 6), study, and consulting-room were stuffed with antiquities (Jones, 1955: 425), Freud himself tells us almost nothing about the role that they played in professional sessions with his patients. One exception concerns the so-called 'Rat Man' (Freud, [1909] 1979: 57):

I illustrated my remarks [about 'the discovery of the unknown'] by pointing to the antiquities standing about in my room. They were, in fact, I said, only objects found in a tomb, and their burial had been their preservation: the destruction of Pompeii was only beginning now that it had been dug up.

Some of his patients (e.g. Dorsey, 1976) hardly noticed the antiquities surrounding them, while others (e.g. Ruitenbeek, 1973) do not mention them at all. From patient (the so called) 'Wolf-Man's' perspective, however, entering Freud's study was as if to be in the study of an archaeologist, with the emphasis on ancient Egypt, and other long-vanished epochs (and see Gardiner, 1972: 139; Choisy, 1973: 291; Knight, 1973: 115; Gay, 1988: 170–1, 264; Bergmann, 1989: 177–8 for similar reactions), the 'antiquities . . . no doubt afforded useful stimuli to patients' phantasies' (Jones, 1955: 425). But it is H.D.'s *Tribute to Freud*, (1985) and

her letters to Bryher MacPherson (Lohser and Newton, 1996: 39–75), that reveal reactions to the collection, and its effect both on her as a patient, as well as on Freud himself (e.g. H.D., 1985: 14, 38). Indeed, it is clear, as she claimed, that a very special relationship existed between them, shared through ancient objects – ‘we two met in our love of antiquity’ (e.g. Holland, 1973a,b; H.D., 1985: 63, 175; see also Lohser and Newton, 1996: 39–75; Breger, 2000: 284). H.D. records to Bryher:

He took me into the inner sanctum . . . to show me some more of the Egyptian images, I should think he had some hundreds, rows and rows AND rows. We had about half an hour sitting and talking over the Egyptian . . . it is most thrilling and unexpected and links the whole thing up with Egypt, Crete, Greece.

Without the writings of H.D. it would not be possible to recognize how misleading other accounts may be, for she not only shares with some others of Freud’s patients their first puzzlement at the Egyptological presence all about her when she first catches sight of Freud in his room (H.D., 1985: 38–9, 96–7, 119; and see Bernfeld, 1951: 110), but she also reveals a Freud who not only enjoys, and is proud of, the objects in his collection (e.g. H.D., 1985: 147) but who makes use of them throughout discussions (e.g. H.D., 1985: 143), walking with H.D. to the other room, to find, and then hand to her, a particular statue to make, or emphasize, a particular point (e.g. Dorsey, 1976: 32, 71; H.D., 1985: 67–8, 118, 169, 172, 187; and see Money-Kyrle, 1979: 267; Lohser and Newton, 1996: 54, and 45, 50, 102–3, 114 for other examples of Freud’s use of didactic specimens, such as books, and not excluding his dog!). Indeed, almost everyone ignores Freud’s apparent use of published articles or physical objects, to illustrate a particular point during his analytical sessions (e.g. Wortis, 1940: 846–7). One specific example is Freud’s handing of the statue of Athena (Figures 15 and 7) to her (H.D., 1985: 68–9; and see Bergmann, 1989: 178). Indeed, it has become clear from Lohser and Newton (1996: 23, 159–60, 175) that Freud adopted ‘an overall treatment approach that [was] characterized by flexibility, tact, and individual preference, an approach in which interventions arise from the context of the treatment situation, which includes the analyst’s and the patient’s personalities . . .’.

ATTEMPTS TO DETERMINE THE SIGNIFICANCE TO FREUD OF HIS COLLECTION

Given the paucity of direct information from Freud himself about his collection, it is perhaps not surprising that there exists a spate of psychological and psychoanalytical literature (e.g. Spitz, 1989; Raphael-Leff, 1990: 312; Rizzuto, 1998: 15, 22, 118–31, 258–61) suggesting ‘that these



FIGURE 5 Right-hand side of Freud's desk in London, 'stuffed with antiquities' (Jones, 1955: 425). Objects in Figures 3 and 7 can be identified

Photograph courtesy of Walter Kaufman Collection, Freud Museum, London

FIGURE 6 Left-hand side of Freud's desk in London. The Vishnu of Figure 9 and the 'paperweight' can be identified

Photograph courtesy of Walter Kaufman Collection, Freud Museum, London





FIGURE 7 Roman copy of a Greek original statuette of Athena (No. 3007). Often taken to be Freud's favourite antiquity
Photograph Freud Museum, London

relics do not merely serve as ornamental or decorative function but sensually echo psychic representations', and postulating all kinds of meaning to the collection, based on a variety of criteria. In several cases, the criteria seem unsubstantiated, and detail often remains obscure.

One approach has been to attempt decipherment of the significance of the Freud collection by suggesting readings based on the disposition of the antiquities within the Freud abode, on the assumption that the antiquities were planned to remain, fixed, in locations selected especially by Freud. Yet even here there appears to be considerable doubt about several of the facts. Traditional belief asserts that the locations of the individual pieces in the collection as they are to be seen today in Freud's Hampstead home are identical to those that obtained in his Vienna house: 'Freud's study will be preserved as he left it. Paula Fichtl [the house-keeper] . . . prided herself on being able to remember where each figure went on Freud's desk. She was able to

replicate the exact placement when the desk and sculptures reached London' (International Campaign for the Freud Museum: 5; and see Spector, 1972: 17; Spector, 1975: 21, 23; Berthelsen, 1986: 22, 25; Wells, 1989: 12; Gay, 1989: 635; Breger, 2000: 361; but see Rizzuto, 1998: 19). In fact, however, it now appears certain that the collection never had been static even within the Vienna house (Sachs, 1945: 50–1; Gamwell, 1989: 25; D'Agata, 1994: 9). That there were differences is clear from the fact that in Vienna a figure of Horus was situated next to Freud's chair (Raphael-Leff, 1990: 312–3), but not in London, and Molnar (1992: 121, 153, 190, 5/2/32, 30/5/33) lists several examples of changes in placements. In any case, it is difficult to imagine that Paula Fichtl's memory can really have been faultless. In addition, there exist counterclaims, namely that cabinets were rearranged to fit into the more spacious London house (Jones, 1957: 248). Nevertheless, although the objects were not arranged in exactly the identical way in both countries (and see Wells, 1989: 13), and even if the collection had moved from 'a small and

darkish back room [to] a spacious living room, filled with sunlight . . .' (Sachs, 1945: 102, 187), it can presumably be accepted that their current overall disposition remains more or less as Freud intended them to be – at least in the last years of his life (see Berthelsen, 1986; Barker, 1996: viii; Davies, 1998: 101). As Freud said in a letter from London 8 October 1938 (Freud Museum Newsletter, 1987: 11):

... all [my collection has] stood up to the journey with very little damage, and looks more impressive here than in Berggasse. There is just one thing: a collection to which there are no new additions is really dead.

Some have read significance into a claim that the antiquities were restricted to the consulting-room and study area only (e.g. Bettelheim, 1989: 22; Forrester, 1994: 234; and see H.D., 1985: 3). Others, however (e.g. Jones, 1955: 425), have reported that Freud moved antiquities out of cabinets and onto his desk 'from time to time', and it is also known that he sometimes took recently purchased objects ('usually a small statuette' – Jones, 1955: 393) in and out of the dining room to have their company there, and to study and handle them (Gay, 1988: 171; Raphael-Leff, 1990: 315; Breger, 2000: 290); 'Afterwards it would be returned to his desk and then brought back again for a day or two' (Jones, 1955: 393). There are other claims (e.g. Binswanger, 1973: 360; Knight, 1973: 115; Gay, 1988: 171; Schorske, 1993: 37; Gamwell, 1996: 6; Rizzuto, 1998: 18–19; Breger, 2000: 237) that Freud would often 'fondle', 'meditate upon – virtually commune with', or handle lovingly, or stroke, some of his ('favourite' – Gay, 1989: 18)⁵ objects, and smile a greeting to one of his Chinese figures (Figure 8) as he entered the room in the morning (Berthelsen, 1986: 22; Gamwell, 1989: 27; Salisbury, 1989: 23). Less apparently significant, he wrote in August 1899 that he used some of his 'grubby gods' as well as an 'Egyptian head from the



FIGURE 8 One (No. 3126) of the Chinese (lacquered, 19th Century) figures to receive a smiled greeting from Freud as he entered the room in the mornings

Photograph Freud Museum, London

statue of a private person' (Ransohoff, 1976: 64, photo 25; Molnar, 1992: 58), as paperweights (Figure 16. And see Davies et al., 1998: 76), and some of his antiquities were kept in desk drawers (Davies et al., 1998: 79). Forrester (1994: 229) even goes so far as to summarize the situation, '... Freud continually rang the changes on the arrangement in his rooms of the pieces', while D'Agata (1994: 11) stresses that they 'were fully integrated into [Freud's] daily life' (and see Bernfeld, 1951: 109–10; Spector, 1972: 15; Jobst, 1978: 47; Gamwell, 1989: 27; Marinelli, 1998: 10).

On the basis of what has been reviewed so far it would appear illegitimate to infer from the equivocal evidence available any kind of significant inviolable division between, on the one hand, the materials from the past for work purposes and mundane domestic things on the other (Forrester, 1994: 228). The objects were not static fixtures from which it would be legitimate to read important messages deriving from the intentional placing by Freud of specific antiquities in his patients' lines of vision (e.g. Gay, 1988: 171; Forrester, 1994: 224). Much the same must be true for those who purport to understand something important about Freud on the basis of which antiquities were placed in particular positions on his desk (stroked and spoken to, or not). So, for example, if H.D.'s (1985: 67, 147, but see also 118) account may be believed, the positions of antiquities on his desk did not reflect any hierarchy of importance. Although Freud preferred his Athena figure (Figures 15 and 7) to a particular Vishnu figure (Figures 16 and 9), the latter had 'place of honour' on the centre of Freud's desk when H.D. saw it in March 1933, but by 1937 it had been moved to the left-hand corner of the desk (Molnar, 1992: 114–5, 284–5, 9/12/31).

Time and again it is difficult in existing 'interpretations' to distinguish what might be claimed of any collector of anything, from matters specific to Freud, or Freud's collection. Thus, on the one hand, even the usually very careful Molnar allows (1992: 185, 296) a generalization about all collectors to creep into his account, namely that no collector would willingly give away one of a pair. On the other, Storr (1986) concludes: 'We can picture Freud in his study, looking back over 83 years, remembering where and when he had bought a particular statuette or piece of pottery' and, we may add, remembering those who had presented him with particular objects.

All this must raise vexed questions as to the appropriate 'level(s)' at which to attempt to understand Freud's attitude(s) to antiquities (e.g. Salisbury, 1989: 24; and see e.g. Porter, 1996: 111–4 for a variety of emphases not attempted in the present work; and see Breger, 2000: 60 for a similar problem with assessing the significance of Freud's comments on Rome). As one instance, the quotation (8/10/38) from Freud, given earlier in this section, can be taken to show that he wanted to receive his collection in good order, and that he intended to continue as

before, giving some items away, but also acquiring new examples. Perhaps it is therefore legitimate to follow Bettelheim's (1989: 19) reading, that: '... viewing the settings in which it all happened [does not] explain the man (or his work) ... [although it] does tell something of his style of life, of his interests and pleasures.' But it is difficult to know whether 'common sense' also allows acceptance of Barker's (1996: xx) claim that: 'While Freud's collection of antiquities reveals a great deal about him, it conceals even more than it reveals about his psyche, his history and tradition, and the processes of the mind ...'

Maybe, therefore, Gay (1976: 19) gets it right when he describes what the collected antiquities gave to Freud: gratification, pleasure, taking him out of his daily routine, conjuring up trips taken and trips yet to take, freeing him from his work and yet bringing him back to it. Such readings may be allowed to convince, and they are not in conflict with Freud's comment that figures on his desk made him feel at home in his new house, or even that 'his little statues and images helped stabilize the evanescent idea, or keep it from escaping altogether' (H.D., 1985: 175; Lohser and Newton, 1996: 55) or by Sachs' observation (1945: 111–12) that 'Freud has the habit of taking one or other piece of his collection from its place, and examining it by sight and touch while he was talking'. Such observations do not appear to do any harm, although they also do not get near to the specificity of the Freud collection. Any danger may come when such observations are given weighty emphasis by use of terms such as 'emblems' (Jones, 1953: 363–4; Gay, 1988: 171; and see Barker, 1996: xi–xii; Davies et al., 1998: 79). All this is certainly non-specific, revealing little or nothing about why Freud did what he did; thus, as Ransohoff has pointed out (1976: 64, photo 26), 'we do not know why Freud chose the figure of [a] minor Egyptian deity for [the] special place [on the right] next to his desk'.

It may be that 'Freud populated his study with embodiments of the mental fragments from a buried past that he sought to uncover' (Gamwell, 1989: 21) but, as has been seen, very rarely do interpretations focus on the details of the collection. Where they do, they concentrate either on supposed classes of objects, or on the supposed symbolisms of individual pieces – especially of Athena (Figure 7) the 'undisputed favourite of his entire collection' (Gamwell, 1996: 8; and see Schorske, 1997), about which (or whom) Freud said: 'She is perfect, only she has lost her spear' (Holland, 1973a: 474, 1973b: 483; Davies et al., 1998: 80–1; Molnar, 1992: 304). Similarly, the number of figures of Neith in Freud's collection is linked by Ransohoff (1976: 61, photo 18) to Freud's interest in androgyny. However, in one of the few relevant examples taken from Freud's own words, the gift from India of the ivory statuette of Vishnu (Figure 9), apparently a recent carving from Travancore with even more recent, subsequent additions of decoration, sandalwood base,

and Sanskrit inscription (Chatterji, 1935: 5), evokes no iconographical comment; instead it is spoken of (see Molnar, 1992: 114–15, 284–5, 9/12/31) more as some kind of commemorative souvenir: ‘it will recall to my mind the progress of Psychoanalysis, the proud conquest it has made in foreign countries and the kind feelings it has aroused in some of my contemporaries at least’.

Many authors seem preconditioned to look only for deep symbolic meanings. What really is the evidence that: ‘Thus, in Freud’s collection of antiquities, work and pleasure, early impulses and sophisticated adult sublimations flowed into one’ (Gay, 1988: 173), or that the ‘archaeological collection peopled [Freud’s] work rooms with sublimated expressions of eternal, universal desires . . . resonat[ing] with psychic representations and dream figures in Freud’s own internal world . . .’ (Raphael-Leff, 1990: 333)?

A starting point in some attempts to assess the significance of his collection to Freud himself has been the assumption of great meaning to the whole complex of his material culture objects. In this context, attention has been mainly focused on Freud’s alleged refusal to flee the

FIGURE 9 Ivory statuette of Vishnu (No. 3004). A gift from India of a recent carving from Travancore with subsequent additions of decoration, sandalwood base, and Sanskrit inscription

Photograph Stuart Laidlaw. Freud Museum, London



Nazis before his collection would be allowed to leave the country (Bettelheim, 1983: 42; M. Freud, 1983: 216). However, this version of events may appear to have been exceptionally unlikely. Instead, reaction to Anna Freud's detention by the Nazis (Sachs, 1945: 180) had been the actual trigger to decide definitively to leave the country (Bertin, 1982: 200; Scholz-Strasser, 1998: 8, 14–15). Such an assumed attitude to his collection, in conjunction with a remark in correspondence with Wilhelm Fliess that he received '... exceptional renewal and comfort' from his objects, are often taken as support for the view that the collection was of vital importance to him, 'offer[ing] rest, refuge and encouragement' (Molnar, 1992: xvii). Rizzuto (1998: 18) goes so far as to claim that Freud 'was never alone as long as he was with his antique objects'. Indeed, support for this view may be reflected in Freud's habit of taking some⁶ of his antiquities with him on his regular months away from Berggasse in the 9th district of Vienna (Tögel, 1996: 85–7; Marinelli, 1998: 11–12) to his 'quasi-rural idyll[s]' (Scholz-Strasser, 1998: 19) where he was most concerned with writing (Tögel, 1989: 149–59; Molnar, 1992: 70, 9/5/30).

However, perhaps in contrast, commentators make almost no mention of Freud never having apparently updated a detailed list which he claimed to have compiled in 1914 (Jones, 1955: 173; Falzeder and Brabant, 1996: 13; Davies, 1998: 100), nor of having made a catalogue of his collection (Forrester, 1994: 239; but see Jobst, 1978: 48; D'Agata, 1994: 20–1)⁷, or that his objects were 'not arranged in any systematic way, not by subject or by period' (Bettelheim, 1989: 22; and see Spector, 1972: 10–11; Forrester, 1994: 229; but cf. Jobst, 1978: 48). On this evidence alone it might be tempting to think of Freud's collecting as focused primarily on the act of accumulation, but this does not accord with his frequent gifts to favoured friends and colleagues. Freud was a giver, not merely an accumulator; his apparent equanimity in having given away an Etruscan vessel, however much he may have regretted it later (Freud, [1900] 1985: 202; and see Kuspit, 1989: 143) needs to be recognized. Whatever order may, or may not, have been intended, by at least 1938 antiquities had spilled on to the floor (e.g. Ransohoff, 1976: 66, photos 31, 32).

Another example of possible unwarranted over-assumption concerns a remark by Freud about 'strange secret yearnings perhaps from the heritage of my ancestors from the Orient and the Mediterranean', from which some (e.g. Gay, 1988: 172, 602; Gay, 1989: 18–19) have claimed to be able to detect fundamental Jewish feelings (and see Schorske, 1973; Spitz, 1989: 153, 155–8; Schorske, 1993; Schorske, 1997) from the nature of Freud's collection (and see Corcoran, 1991: 26), but such views do not attempt to explain Freud's purchasing of Buddhas and other items deriving from the Far East.

A quite different set of problems exist with regard to the recent literature which is almost entirely focused in its detail on the 67 pieces

which had been chosen in the 1960s from the available 2000 or so objects in the London-based collection, to be exhibited as a travelling exhibition to the United States (Wells, 1989: 11; Clayton, 1990: 37; Barker, 1996: viii). It is difficult to resist the conclusion that associated publications were not founded on any real examination of Freud's collection. Thus, for example, Barker (1996: vii):

Each of the pieces Freud bought had a special association for him, telling part of the story of the culture Freud saw as symbolically combined in and articulated by them, and of which he was both a part and a spokesperson.

Neither this, nor assertions that Freud much 'preferred complete objects, eschewing fragments and damaged ones' (e.g. Bernfeld, 1951: 111; Jones, 1957: 318; Bettelheim, 1989: 22) can easily be reconciled with Freud's pride in his spearless Athena and broken Myrina figures, both incomplete, nor with what is now known about his collection of objects from the excavations at Duna-Pentele (see later).

Several existing interpretations of Freud's archaeological collection and collecting appear to be insufficiently aware of the realities of archaeological enquiry. For example, Bettelheim (1989: 23) does not appear to have seen that if his claim about Freud's predilection for whole objects is correct, then most of Freud's pieces would anyway have had to derive from funerary contexts, where material is generally best preserved. Instead, Bettelheim (1989: 22–3), wishing to understand how the objects in his collection 'fitted together in [Freud's] mind', prefers to postulate some significant relationship between the act of psychological recovery of information, with the inaccessible, but preserved, nature of buried archaeological material (and see e.g. Spector, 1972: 12, 28; Spector, 1975: 22 for another example of stressing the collection's 'theme of death and burial'). Even Molnar (1992: xiv, xxi) appears to invoke a 'death theme' to explain Freud's increasing interest during the 1930s in Buddha figures and oriental objects.⁸

Several of the points discussed here have drawn attention to the different levels of analysis which may be applied to the study of material culture. Freud's collection, and present-day attitudes towards it, represent an important case study of changing values which may be ascribed to collected objects.

THE RELEVANCE OF FREUD'S COLLECTING OF ANTIQUITIES TO TODAY'S WORLD OF MATERIAL CULTURE STUDIES

SOME HISTORY

In the context of today's international insistence on the vital importance of the authentic archaeological context of an object, it is perhaps easy to

forget that negative attitudes towards collecting unprovenanced ancient material have not always existed (e.g. Shelton, 1994; Thomas, 1994; Prösler, 1996: 28–31; and see Haskell and Penny, 1981 for a review of early collections). It was held that the meanings of things *could* be experienced without knowledge of detailed archaeological contexts. Indeed, at the turn of the 19th/20th centuries, collecting by archaeologists such as Sir William Flinders Petrie, and many others, led to the creation of what are now major Egyptological resources of antiquities; those such as Petrie distributed (for both financial and educational reasons) examples of such antiquities widely across the world (see Ucko, 1998). Collections such as University College London's Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology included both excavated and bought, unprovenanced, material (e.g. see MacDonald, 2000: 68–70). Changing 'heritage' (antiquities) legislations, mainly from the early 20th century onwards, put an end to excavators having the right to expect to take an agreed proportion of finds from their excavations to fill collections back home, or to sell to dealers and collectors. As a result, some collector-excavators, such as Petrie, changed the locations of their excavations (in Petrie's case, from Egypt to Palestine). Politics also had an influence in other ways; for example, early in the 20th century, the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian empire led collectors such as Freud to find sources other than Hungary from which to obtain material to fill their own collections. Dealing in antiquities, as well as the production of forgeries, were commonplace (see e.g. Gamwell and Wells, 1989: 58, 60, 115, 127), as were public display and exhibitions of what today is termed the material culture of past societies.

The turn of the century was a time of great archaeological endeavour at vast and often complex sites, such as Troy, Knossos and Naqada. Another reason why a certain amount of material was allocated to the excavator to do whatever s/he wished with it, was the assumption that some material could be considered as 'duplicates' (and see Ucko, 1998: 358–9, 380–2 for further consideration of this concept). Indeed the notion of duplicate ceramic material was still accepted by some renowned professional archaeologists well into the 1950s (see Ucko, 1998: 379), and for some classes of objects such as prehistoric flint 'waste', or Roman tiles, until much later. Assigning 'values' at any time to 'classes' of ancient materials must be seen clearly to be an activity and assessment *of the present*, in the case of flint 'waste' nowadays seen often to be able to afford important evidence regarding re-use, the landscape, and/or manufacturing processes (Pers. Comm., James Conolly). 'Value' is usually completely divorced from the actual role played by the object concerned in antiquity – 'a value is decided in moving from past to present through the work of desire' (Shanks, 1992: 105).

The turn of the 20th century was also the period when several National Museums became proactively engaged in the acquisition of

material (and see Gamwell, 1989: 22), both by sponsoring expeditions and by buying antiquities. Indeed, then, as now, as Olivier and Coudart claim (1995: 365), material culture was used as the tangible basis of claims and counterclaims regarding nationalism and collective identity:

In fact . . . the essential role of archaeology has been to work to re-appropriate the past, to attempt to mend the splintered mirror of our origins. Just as Freud, at the time of the 'rediscovery' of the ruins of Troy . . . , had the very same insight, archaeology literally gives body to the myth of origins, by revealing its material presence, buried almost intact under the weight of the debris of the past. These thousands of vases, pieces of jewellery, weapons and tools collected in museums are the accumulation of the material proofs that this original past, on which the collective identity is based, really did exist.

COLLECTING, COLLECTORS, AND MUSEUMS

Some would view collecting as anyway due to an innate from-childhood-to-adult human desire to acquire (e.g. see Bal, 1994: 102). Of course, to postulate such a universal desire does not begin to explain why not all humans are indeed collecting, or collectors. Even if only partially correct, such a postulated desire to collect would seem to imply that the collecting of *antiquities* is *not* concerned with a unique category (Baudrillard, 1996: 73):

There is a whole range of objects – including unique, baroque, folkloric, exotic and antique objects – . . . that appear to run counter to the requirements of functional calculation, and answer to other kinds of demands such as witness, memory, nostalgia or escapism.

Even if we follow Olivier and Coudart (1995), this should not imply that collecting of material culture has necessarily always been for the same reasons, both in the distant past, more recently, or at present. What ancient Mesopotamian 'museums' (Woolley, 1929: 199–204) were concerned with is at least unlikely to be exactly the same as their 20th-century AD 'counterparts'. Furthermore, it would undoubtedly be simplistic to expect one reason only to have lain behind the collections of those such as Petrie. In his case, his collection was in part undoubtedly acquired for research and educational purposes, but also for self-aggrandisement in his career at University College London, and no doubt also for posterity, as part of his nationalist concerns as a 'typical Britisher' (Ucko, 1998: 351).

Nowadays, historical collections are analysed using a variety of different approaches, such as historical, narrative, art historical, and also sociological (and see e.g. Bal, 1994: 100–5; Macdonald and Fyfe, 1996). It is widely accepted that the social status (and, usually therefore, also

the wealth) of the collector is an important variable (e.g. Bal, 1994: 103). In Freud's case it is clear that he controlled no big budget, and that he therefore could only afford to buy at good prices (and see Molnar, 1992: 188, 2/8/35 for an example of an apparent bargain, and Jobst, 1978: 47 for Freud's buying, and subsequent treatment of, pieces of fresco from Pompeii). Nor was he trying to impress the public through open ostentation; he kept his 'museum' for family, friends (who sometimes included archaeologists), and 'patients'.

Despite what psychoanalysts (e.g. Bernfeld, 1951: 127; Spector, 1975: 24, 26) might prefer to claim, there is nothing to indicate that Freud's collecting had any deeper significance than those who enjoy collecting stamps, or buy a CD to cheer themselves up (and see Formanek, 1994: 330). After all, Freud wrote, 'During the last few days I acquired some very beautiful things, essentially to keep me in a good mood' (Brabant et al., 1992: 152). Such a conclusion obtains despite Freud's own writings about 'the questing spirit of the collector' (Freud, 1914: 120), which see a profound relationship (of desire) between (sexual) fetishism and (substitute) object (e.g. see Pearce, 1992: 74, 81–3; Bal, 1994: 104–6; Formanek, 1994: 327–9; Pearce, 1995: 7–8, 32; Baudrillard, 1996: 86–7; Dant, 1996; Marinelli, 1998: 18–9 for useful reviews). Such 'fetishistic' preoccupation ('a strong, mostly eroticised attachment to a single object or category' (Bal, 1994: 105), 'a desire to hold, look, touch; captivation by the consecrated object' (Shanks, 1992: 99), does not obviate the fact that material culture objects can, and do, attract meanings that were never part of the originating craftsmen/culture concerned. As Barrett (1994: 37) puts it, the process of reinterpretation may be likened to a process of textual 'creation', from authorship to researcher to annotator to author, and so on, cyclically. In this sense, at least, the absence of archaeological context may even assist the archaeological 'Just-So' story, or the psychoanalytical interpretation. So, for example, at the time of Sir Arthur Evans and Sigmund Freud it was easier to posit the existence of a Cretan prehistoric Mother Goddess cult, while ignorant of the fact that the contexts of all the small female figurines, supposedly her images, were almost exclusively from rubbish (Ucko, 1962; Ucko, 1968: 309–10). 'Archaeological context' is not a unitary matter; there is every difference in the world between knowing that a figurine derives from Crete, from Neolithic Crete, from Neolithic levels at Knossos, from rubbish accumulated outside houses at Knossos.

There appears to be nothing in Freud's actions to support the image of Baudrillard's (1996) collector, grasping and passionately sexually perverted – who him/herself '... is a misfit who would be at home in Freud's Vienna, perhaps even in Freud's cabinet of antiquities' (Schor, 1994: 256)!

As we have seen earlier, Freud can be recognized as a serious collector who wished to acquire as much knowledge as possible about the

objects in his collection, and consequently, perhaps, to be able to enjoy them more (and see Bourdieu and Darbel, 1991). There is nothing about Freud's collecting that indicates acquisition for the sake of acquisition (with boxes remaining unopened, and the contents unstudied, ignored). Also perhaps because he was a serious collector, at least later in life he wished only to own the 'genuine' specimen. He would go to considerable lengths to rid himself of objects that subsequently turned out to have been forged (Gamwell, 1989: 23, 31, note 27). Already in Freud's time there was 'honour amongst thieves', with dealers willing to take objects back if they had been subsequently declared forgeries by experts (Brabant et al., 1992: 126). Presumably it will never be known whether Freud's insistence on the genuine article had anything to do with an extension to Bagnall's (1996: 244–5) suggestion that empathy with the past will work (for the public) *only so long as it is still possible to believe that it is an authentic past*. In any case, matters are almost certainly more complex than this. So, for example, Baudrillard (1996: 83):

In the last reckoning every antique is beautiful *merely because it has survived, and thus become the sign of an earlier life*. It is our fraught curiosity about our origins that prompts us to place such mythological objects, the signs of a previous order of things, alongside the functional objects which, for their part, are the signs of our current mastery. For we want at one and the same time to be entirely self-made and yet be descended from someone . . . Our technological civilization has rejected the wisdom of the old, but it bows down before the solidity of old things, whose unique value is sealed and certain.

In addition, a replica – *unlike* a forgery – is itself in some sense 'authentic' (and see Ucko, 2000: 71–3). For Baudrillard (1996: 84) too 'the past in its entirety has been pressed into the service of consumption', with the result that 'authenticity, in the end, is neither here nor there'. Certainly, Freud claimed to get huge emotional satisfaction (Gamwell, 1989: 24–5) from his possession of plaster casts of statues (almost certainly all that he could afford at the time in 1896 – but by 1901 he owned a fragment of a real wall fresco from Pompeii (Davies et al., 1998: 76). Today many recognize that an object may have great significance to its owner or to its viewer whether or not its meaning is 'intrinsic' or subsequently 'imposed' (see e.g. Weil, 1995: 106). Furthermore, it can be argued (e.g. Pearce, 1994: 2–3) that a new and meaningful relationship exists for an object once it forms part of a human's collection. In any case when Freud 'identified with' his Chinese figure (Figure 8) by greeting it in the mornings, he did not know that it was probably not an authentic Chinese piece (Spector, 1975: 22; and see Gamwell, 1989: 32, note 36)!

The imposition of changed meanings on objects is not a thing of the past. Nowadays, it is not only replicas which are being used for such

apparently educational 'good causes' as hands-on experiences both for children and adults. Sometimes such material – no doubt at some increased risk of breakage and loss – includes the 'authentic', 'ubiquitous' Roman lamp, examples of the thousands of small Egyptian amuletic deities available from most periods and contexts, or the 'redundant' tile or example of flint debitage. Self-evidently, when museums today 'dispose' of antiquities, they are removing the material into a further context. There are probably several good educational grounds for some such disposals. Indeed, those such as Besterman (1992) believe that museum curators should even go as far as non-registration of those objects coming into their collections which have the potential of becoming part of handling collections, for the 'greater good' of 'public accessibility'. Others favour putting some categories of objects 'on deposit and not formally accessioned into the museum's collection' to allow flexibility of action (Herle, 1994: 4).

SOME COMMENTS ON THE SOURCES OF FREUD'S COLLECTIONS

Given the time and context of Freud's practical involvement with archaeology, it is perhaps difficult to feel that he (or anyone else) was wrong to have acquired objects available on the market in order to enjoy such possessions, and even to give them away to those whom he believed would appreciate them. This raises the question whether Freud's acquisition of available antiquities on the market should be judged to have been qualitatively different from his support of 'tomb robbing' at Duna-Pentele (see Ascherson, 2000).

Many (e.g. Salisbury, 1989: 24; Davies, 1998: 98–9; Marinelli, 1998: 9; del Conde, 2000) writing about Freud's collecting activities appear uncertain whether he was acquiring objects for aesthetic or historical reasons although, of course, these two may well not be mutually exclusive. One problem in reaching any judgement is that it is not known how far items which became part of the collection were chosen by friends, how far they were dependent on the advice of experts (Davies et al., 1998: 78–9, 83), or how far they were Freud's own selection. Even when they were incorporated by Freud into his collection it still remains difficult always to know what to conclude. For example, Molnar says about Freud's jade collecting, that the mention of the acquisition of individual pieces in Freud's 'diary' might suggest that they were of some special significance, but his library contained little or no specialist literature about jade, and most of the actual pieces in the collection were of rather poor quality (Molnar, 1992: 61, 85, 112, 4/3/30, 3/10/30). Of course, the quality of the pieces need not have affected their significance to Freud.

The case of Duna-Pentele, however, is rather different since it

directly reflects what Freud's *own* attitudes and actions were. Part of Freud's interest in the Duna-Pentele material could well have been the knowledge that however non-statuesque and damaged the objects which he was buying, they could be assumed to be both 'Roman' and 'genuine'. His Austro-Hungarian transactions were stopped by Freud not because they were not producing sculptures, nor because the pieces from the site were not intact, but because in 1910 the 'dealer' disappeared. Eventually, Ferenczi, because of the apparent unreliability of their go-between, promised to 'write to the mayor of Dunapentele that the peasants can come to me directly with finds' (Brabant et al., 1992: 171–2). However, as far as is known, nothing further was ever received by Ferenczi/Freud from Duna-Pentele. In any case, attempts by Ferenczi to continue to supply Freud with antiquities would have been stopped when it was no longer possible to smuggle antiquities from Hungary to Austria. By the end of April 1930 Ferenczi could only offer to supply Freud with a Romano-Egyptian figure of Osiris supposedly found in Hungary (Molnar, 1992: 66; Falzeder et al., 2000: 392).⁹

At first sight Freud's interest in the material from Duna-Pentele appears to support an emphasis on historical rather than aesthetic criteria. Thus, in a letter in February 1910 (Brabant et al., 1992: 136), Freud opted to continue acquiring objects from the site despite having been warned that the 'excavator' (who also received items found by local farmers) 'can pocket the nicest things!' (Brabant et al., 1992: 134–5).

FIGURE 10 Some of Freud's collection of Osiris figures as currently displayed in the London Freud Museum

Photograph Louise Martin





FIGURE 11 Glass receptacle (No. 3531). Possibly the one whose 'play of colours' so impressed Freud

Photograph Stuart Laidlaw. Freud Museum, London

However, from within the objects deriving from Duna-Pentele, which Ferenczi had described as 'rather nice clay pots, a spearhead, a string of glass beads, and a bronze bowl', Freud distinguished those which were 'certainly quite modest' (Brabant et al., 1992: 137) from 'better objects', which he listed as 'glass, rings, statues'. In this same letter of 13 February Freud refers to the first objects from the site as 'samples of forepleasure', and then moves on to the next topic in the correspondence, 'Now to more important things'. In early March, Freud commented on a further clutch

of objects sent from Duna-Pentele as 'meagre', but 'the glass beads are beautiful' (Brabant et al., 1992: 147), and later in the same month he remarks, 'I recently acquired some antiquities of outstanding quality. Dunapentele will have difficulty reaching that standard' (Brabant et al., 1992: 150). Freud remained interested in the products of Duna-Pentele, sometimes pleased with what was sent to him, at other times critical. He expressed pleasure at a 'glass which produced a magical play of colours after being scratched in the appropriate spot' (Figure 11) – 'I wish you could have seen it' (Brabant et al., 1992: 161; see Gamwell and Wells 1989: 121 for an example of what Freud might have been referring to; and see Salisbury 1989: 24) – and displeasure: 'The little bronze things are not worth anything . . .' (Brabant et al., 1992: 161).

From this review it is clear that Freud had definite views both about the financial value of objects, and about their aesthetic quality (see H.D., 1985: 70 for a patient's view of Freud's aesthetic sense; and see also Gombrich, 1966; Bergmann, 1989: 179). This reveals a rather different emphasis from that of Freud's only remarks on this subject, where he appears to underplay his own interest in anything artistic, anything beyond the subject matter of a piece (quoted in Gamwell and Wells, 1989: 121; and see Trosman, 1991; Forrester, 1994: 229).

Overall, what remains significant is that Freud kept a large amount of provincial Roman material in his collection, including numerous broken pieces (Figure 12, and see note 2). In maintaining an interest in such functional items as Roman provincial safety-pins and bracelets from Duna-Pentele (Figure 13), Freud appears very distinct from others'



FIGURE 12 Some of the damaged and broken items (including Nos 3423, 4703-7, 4715-17) possibly from Duna-Pentele, currently in the London Freud Museum (and see Figure 13)

Photograph Stuart Laidlaw

FIGURE 13 Some of the items possibly from Duna-Pentele, currently in the London Freud Museum: trumpet brooch (No. 3393), two crossbow brooches (Nos 3320, 3448), shale bangle (No. 4679), bone hairpin (No. 3249), bone hairpin with figured head (No. 3294), metal ear scoop (No. 3246), bronze spoon (No. 3458)

Photograph Stuart Laidlaw



'total disdain for "mass-produced" Roman material' (J. Wilkes, pers. comm.), about which Collingwood wrote:

... the impression that constantly haunts the archaeologist, like a bad smell or a stickiness on the fingers, is that of an ugliness which pervades ... like a London fog, not merely the Common Vulgar ugliness of the Roman Empire, but a blundering, stupid ugliness that cannot even rise to the level of that vulgarity. (Collingwood and Myres, 1937: 250)

It may be fanciful to suggest that it could have been the archaeologist in Freud, with his appreciation of the importance of archaeological context, that led him to covet the Duna-Pentele material for, in this case, the archaeological provenance and assumed date were known, albeit not the details of archaeological find-spot. It is perhaps ironic to think that today's censoring would have concentrated exclusively on the legality, or otherwise, of the 'export' of the material from Hungary to Austria.

AD 2001 AND THE FUTURE

Jones (1957: 209) records that in the 1930s Freud used objects from his collection to attempt to interest his grandson in archaeology as a career. Sixty years on, it is only a foolhardy archaeologist (e.g. Ucko, 1989) who would have dared to admit that his interest in his chosen archaeological profession had originally (admittedly in childhood!) been stimulated by collecting unprovenanced archaeological objects. In the 21st century, such collecting is under fierce attack from many quarters, based on the argument that everything should be done to preserve archaeological context (and see Corcoran, 1991: 28 for an interesting discussion of the way that 'archaeological significance' has been destroyed by the collecting of mummy portraits by Freud and others). In general it is claimed that through the collection, study or publication by archaeologists of unprovenanced material, objects are given an 'authenticity' and thereby gain in the market place, and thus can only promote future illegal excavating and those involved in dealing. Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn (Renfrew, 2000: 76) refers to such activities as 'the rape of humanity's shared cultural heritage', and Alex Hunt of the Council for British Archaeology (*The Times* 2 April 2001) likens such activities to the selling of endangered species (but see also Ede, 2000; and Shanks, 1992: 101; and especially Geismar, 2001 for some of the actual complexities of the 'marketplace'). The potential loss of information about the archaeological object, even of the object itself, consequent to this policy, is apparently judged as of less importance than the absence of knowledge of the original provenance of the object concerned.

The Institute of Archaeology, University College London, for example, has recently adopted a policy whereby it publicizes its support

for the 1970 UNESCO 'Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property' and the 1995 UNIDROIT 'Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects', thus having an ethics formal policy concerning the illicit trade in antiquities. Translated into action this in effect means that Institute staff should refuse to have anything to do with post-1970 unprovenanced archaeological material, from authentication to publication, even when the aim might be to show that an object acquired since 1970 as genuine by a museum or collector is in fact a forgery.

It must be presumed that the current negative attitude to the collecting of unprovenanced antiquities derives from a belief that today we now have a better understanding (of the effects of such activities) than existed previously, and that material culture from the past can best, or even only, be understood within its archaeological context, the latter therefore being of pre-eminent importance. However, recent evaluations of the kind of information to be derived from antique material culture do not necessarily support any assumption about the exclusive pre-eminence of archaeological context for understanding. Thus, Shanks (1992: 105) has to argue about 'archaeological context':

... age and authenticity, originality ... are not intrinsic values, essential qualities. What would be an essential quality of 'authenticity'? Truth to self? ... the archaeologist prefers to guarantee authenticity through context – where the object comes from, the traces of the objects 'present'.

Yet, however sophisticatedly expressed, even this position is not accepted by everyone. For example, Baudrillard (1996: 74) stresses that any antique object, while indeed signifying some concept of a time dimension, 'is always eccentric – no matter how authentic it is, there is always something false about it'.

Today's situation,¹⁰ whereby censure only applies to post-1970 activity, appears to leave Ucko's small personal collection acquired in the 1960s unstigmatized, no doubt to some critics remaining evidence of unethical practice, but, in some strange way, otherwise adjudged 'innocent'. Equally no one (yet?) threatens the Freud (or British or Petrie) Museums with confiscation. If not merely pragmatically-based, a positive view of the agreed 1970 cut-off might be taken to epitomize the recognition that standards and the relative values of ethical stances change with time and differing circumstances (not only expectations about what is good or inappropriate practice,¹¹ and thus whether archaeologists may or may not also act as dealers (and see Corcoran, 1991: 22), but also how to recognize a forgery from an authentic piece).

The question is, what is it that has changed so significantly between, let us say, the time of Freud, and today, to make us sanguine about promulgating a new ethical stance concerning what to do about

unprovenanced, or illegally excavated, archaeological objects. As archaeologists, clearly 'archaeological context' is of vital significance. Yet, presumably no one simply claims that there is nowadays agreement that local Hungarian or Malian peasants are less deserving of an income from the products of their local habitats than they were in Freud's times. Nor can it be claimed that current legal conventions are aimed exclusively at middlemen raking in what may be considered obscene profits by transporting antiquities to western and eastern capitals (and who must, presumably, incur considerable expenditure and time in so doing).

One significant difference may be the role nowadays assigned to the importance of 'heritage' from the past (whether site, museum object, or whatever) to living cultures. Today's 'world' of UNESCO and elsewhere, has taken on as a priority the 'protection' of such heritages on the assumption that, without preservation of visible heritage, societies will suffer in the future. The archaeological protectionist cry is often against the rape of the past of a Third World country.

Perhaps another contributory factor derives from changes in evaluating the nature and role of material culture. Many recent and current authors assume that a primary reason why Freud and others collected, was so that 'meaning', the essence of an ancient culture, would/could be transmitted via the material culture object. Whether Freud really did believe this as his commentators propound is in fact not very likely, since his practice was to let objects out from, as well as into, his collection (and see Forrester, 1994: 230). In any case, it could be argued that any assumption about the transmission of a specific cultural message would not have fitted comfortably with Freud's 'Just So' approach to archaeological interpretation. Indeed, he had a very 'modern' view of at least one area of current debate (letter of 1/11/28 quoted in Gamwell and Wells, 1989: 123): 'Forms may pass away, but their meaning can survive them and seek to express themselves in other forms.'

It might seem, therefore, that Freud would have been very much at home with some modern material culture theory, which denies a single 'level' of 'meaning' inherent to a particular material culture object (see e.g. Merriman, 1999). In this regard (see also e.g. Shanks, 1992: 63), he would probably have echoed Barrett's words:

The naive position which treats the record as a transmitter of meaning and which assumes that some authentic, original meaning can be recovered by discovering what single meaning is represented by the record, cannot be sustained. (Barrett, 1994: 166)

There are other parts of current archaeological debate with which Freud would probably also have felt quite at ease, not least with the argument that, 'The initial step is the realization that there is no such thing

as the 'truth' about the past; only our subjective interpretation, now, about what happened in the past' (Pearson and Sullivan, 1995: 291).

In this regard, today's archaeologists' claim that they occupy the ethical 'high ground' by banning all academic consideration of unprovenanced antiquities, may not seem entirely convincing. The current archaeological orthodoxy is that 'real' 'meaning' cannot be grasped without an understanding of archaeological context. This raises essential questions about the very nature of archaeological enquiry which has for long recognized the central role of material culture to its interests. From typologies to studies of innovation and diffusion, the nature of 'object'(s) and what can legitimately be 'read' from them, has preoccupied researchers and museum curators all over the world, and these discussions continue today (e.g. Hodder, 1989; Barrett, 1994; Schor, 1994: 256; and see Gosden and Marshall, 1999). Most are now agreed that 'meaning' or 'significance' is not inviolably tied to a particular object (or site), and that qualities can be, and are, switched to whatever is available at a particular time, and when it is considered appropriate in any particular cultural situation or specific historical development (e.g. Holtorf, *in press*). There is surely something Freudian in Barrett's (1994: 76, 96) view that:

Material culture, employed within one field of discourse, can be inscribed with meanings which may be recalled in another, thus guiding the actions in other places and at other times.

Material culture has its own history. The material resources upon which actions draw outlive and extend beyond the scale of the various interventions of agency upon which they depend for their reproduction. The material consequences of action can obviously outlive their active deployment in a given historical tradition. The distanced cultural objects become abandoned, forgotten, reinvented or incorporated almost unnoticed into another world.

In Bal's (1994: 104–5) view, material culture objects gather meanings to themselves as a consequence of being collected, when the act of collecting 'becomes a form of subordination, appropriation, de-personification'. In her view (and see Clifford, 1988; Baudrillard, 1996), collecting is confined to the acquisition of objects which have become 'other' in a sense which makes them available to all; in other words, 'this is done by cutting objects off from their context' (Bal, 1994: 105, 110; Baudrillard, 1996: 86–7).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Maybe it is at least in part due to the recognition of the unique and complex quality of the collecting process that there is evidence for a developing acceptance that 'old collections' are a resource in their own

right, and that there is historical value in keeping such collections static – ‘fossilized’, as it were, to a particular time, or to the particular interests of the collector concerned (Lane-Fox, 1891; Thompson, 1977). As Schadla-Hall (in Ucko, 1998: 382) has said on behalf of academic and museologist colleagues, museum collections should be made use of according to the ‘paradigms of the times (socio-economic, intellectual, etc) in which they are made, and . . . we should respect these – and leave their results in place as far as possible’. Such an

approach recognizes that the principles of classification adopted at the time may no longer be apt, or even believable, but that there is virtue in understanding (and witnessing) the results of such previous assumptions, principles, and practices. On this argument, historical collections retain value even after interest in the non-collecting activities of the specific collector may have disappeared.

Forrester (1994: 241) has recently claimed that ‘Freud’s psychoanalysis . . . transform[ed] despised and neglected objects into precious things . . .’. Certainly, the material culture objects in Freud’s collection have become objects with meaning and significance to the 20th and 21st centuries. ‘This is not a one-time act, for meaning changes as the collection as a whole changes. As the narrative develops, each object already inserted is modified anew’ (Bal, 1994: 111); the beautiful ‘statuette’ becomes the beautiful ‘object’ (Baudrillard, 1996: 86).

There is no doubt that the objects in Freud’s collection had differing significances for Freud himself (probably quite different in Vienna from during ill old age in London), for his housekeeper, and for his patients such as H.D. (see Bergmann, 1989: 178). The changing nature of their significance(s) is no doubt reflected in the nature of changes in the London Freud Museum itself; nowadays no longer growing, described by Forrester (1994: 229) as a curious entity, a ‘museum within a museum, a collection of antiquities within a museum devoted to the founder of psychoanalysis’, it currently includes activities ‘to ensure that the house [does] not [become] merely a relic of the past’ (Storr, 1986).¹² In such

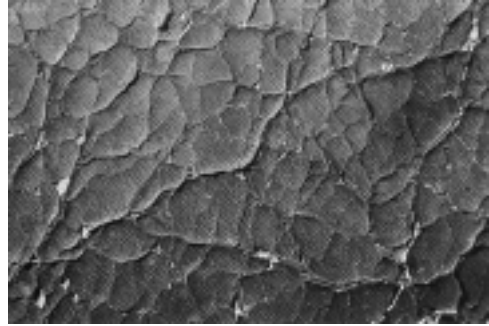


FIGURE 14 ‘Marks made by Freud subconsciously’ revealed by ‘photomicrography of the seat of Freud’s chair’, as immortalized by Cornelia Parker in a 1998/99 exhibition at the Science Museum

Photograph Stuart Laidlaw. Freud Museum, London.

Courtesy Cornelia Parker

circumstances Freud's antiquities gain meanings distinct from those which accompanied them before, no doubt also distinct from those of the psychoanalysts reacting to the Freud Museum's travelling displays to the United States (the 'Sigmund Freud Antiquities: fragments from a buried past', and 'Sigmund Freud: conflict and culture'), let alone from those of the American public (e.g. Salisbury, 1989: 23; Corcoran 1991; Trosman 1991; Barker 1996: x, xiv). It is likely that the only real common denominator to these significance(s) is that none of these perceived 'meanings' would have been shared by those of the people of the ancient world. It is important to recognize that this is a common denominator for both unprovenanced and 'contexted' objects in the collection.

Although many of the objects will no longer be performing their intended functions (whether to hold eye-colouring paints, or to act as a coffin cover of a deceased's face), this should not be seen to imply that they have become in any sense meaningless. As Barker has recently expressed it (and see Bal, 1994: 110–1):

To transpose an object from the past into a narrated present is to bring it into a renewed present, a new reality . . . [It springs from an original object ('memory-trace') but] it may no longer resemble nor contain [it] except as part of a narrative fiction, albeit a narrative with a very profound *present* validity. (Barker, 1996: xi)

To adopt some of the views expressed here, as well as to understand the current debates about the significances of material culture analyses, may not directly assist in understanding some of Freud's theories, nor particularly in coming to grips with his use of archaeological evidence (but see Marinelli, 1998: 16–18). As Thomas (1994: 116) suggests, much of what one can say about institutional collecting is often not necessarily relevant to what he calls the 'private and impassioned pursuit' by an individual collector 'to possess such objects of connoisseurship' (Pearce, 1992: 81). What it does reveal, however, is that Freud was – like so many of us – a human being gaining strength from his collections in a variety of ways, not the least of these being through the development of his 'sense of self' (Bal, 1994: 105). Some may also wish to believe that through his collecting 'the everyday prose of objects [were] transformed into poetry, into a triumphant unconscious discourse' (Baudrillard, 1996: 87).

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Poor Jane Hubert has not only had to read and comment on numerous versions of this work, but has also been forced to cope with my Freudian obsession(s)!

Notes

1. In this article the text citations for Sigmund Freud's works give the date of the original publication in square brackets before the date of the edition used for the page references. It also seeks to provide as full a set of references as possible to Freud's collecting of antiquities.
2. (See Appendix) Professor Zsolt Veig informs me (pers. comm.) that the plundering of the cemetery, which had begun by the 1850s, intensified as vineyards were established there. Apparently, some locals specialized in 'searching for antiquities (*ragázni*)', and such 'searching' continued even after the official Hungarian National Museum excavations had begun in 1906. Funerary finds were sold to 'dealers and antiquarians' who from time to time came from Budapest.

It has proved impossible to securely identify what has happened to all of Freud's collection of material from Duna-Pentele (e.g. the 'rusted piece of bronze with the blurred head of a man' (Brabant et al., 1992: 135), the 'peculiar bone platter in the shape of a fish', and 'a small rusted ring, silver, I think' (Brabant et al., 1992: 145). It is very probable that the 80 items now held in the Vienna Freud Museum include at least some of the objects from Duna-Pentele, those inventoried as Provincial Roman or Medieval (often said to be from Pannonia). Many other Provincial Roman pieces remain in the London Freud Museum. Such items are likely to have derived from Duna-Pentele given that this site was the only accessible cemetery for such material at the time of Freud's collecting.

It seems clear (and see Newlands, 1988: 295–8) that Anna Freud was not at all enthusiastic about sending any of Freud's material back to Vienna, and only allowed supposedly unimportant and unattractive items to be taken (from the London house basement and cabinet drawers). Dr Hans Lobner (pers. comm.) then took them away in personal luggage (in order to avoid any potential Customs complications), unaccompanied by any list or catalogue. Another version of events reports (Dr Helga Jobst, pers. comm.) that the objects arrived in 1974 in a large trunk wrapped in English newspapers. Somehow, between 1974–1998 the collection appears to have increased in number from 75 to its current 80 artefacts. Identifications of these objects in Vienna were left to Austrian archaeologists, especially Drs W. and H. Jobst and, more recently, Dr L. Dolthofer.

3. The likelihood of this referring to Battiscombe 'Jack' Gunn, Professor of Egyptology in the University of Oxford from 1934–1950 may seem somewhat unlikely, given Hughes' (1951: 10) description of Gunn having paid a 'social call on Freud', and the fact that in 1935 Gunn wrote about how happy he had been at the University of Pennsylvania, and now continued to be, at The Queen's College, Oxford (letter of 26/2/35 to the then University of Pennsylvania Museum Director). Perhaps, therefore, it is no more than coincidence that Gunn (1917) published about the ancient Egyptian term, 'Scribe of the House of Life', 'with the special meaning "interpreter of dreams"'.
4. It is not known whether Freud kept hold of this figure. Within the London collection, the only small glazed figure which appears to have been (crudely!) mended some time ago is a figure of Sekhmet (Figure 2).
5. Perhaps one of the most hazardous of all suggestions about one of Freud's objects is D'Agata's (1994: 22–3) claim that an unusually faded area on the stem of a painted Mycenaean figurine could have been due to Freud's handling of the object.
6. Lohser and Newton (1996: 64–5) recount H.D.'s anxiety about one of Freud's impending moves. 'The move was visible now, with stacks of cases and trunks lining the walls of the hallway. The consulting room and study, too, were affected by the turmoil, since Freud was taking along a number of books and objects'. Once there, 'she found the couch here more comfortable and . . . that Freud had brought enough of his art pieces to make the summer residence feel like home'. The exact number and identity of the antiquities taken by Freud on his journeys away from his Berggasse house remain unknown (e.g. see Kardiner, 1977: 19). It is therefore worth quoting at some length from Chatterji's (1935: 3–4) unpublished first-hand account:

Before I sat down I took a glance round the room, and I immediately noticed that a number of small tables which were in the room, and particularly the table in front of which Freud sat on his chair, which he used as his place of work, and a few other smallish tables within easy reach from his chair, and in addition a number of glass cases in the room – all these were filled with a large collection of small images, which were all works of art. On his working table, there were some papers as well as a few books both big and small. But even more than these in number were these little images. There were some racks on his table and these were all packed with figures and images. It looked quite a museum of small art – little statuettes and figurines.

I am also personally an amateur collector in a small way of this kind of *Kleinkunst*, and for me to be in the midst of these fairly large collection [sic] became a sort of *embarras de richesse*. It looked quite a representative collection, – with artefacts of many ages and from many peoples. There were little figures of gods from Egypt, either cast in bronze or made of alabaster or from *terra cotta*, – gods like Osiris, Isis, Hathor, and Sekhmet with her feline face, and others; little bronzes from ancient Greece – Greek gods like Hermes, Aphrodite, Athena; *terra cotta* statuettes from the city of Tanagra and other places in Greece – young girls at play or standing, and gods and goddesses, some of which were carefully displayed in glass cases: Chinese *terra cotta* figures of the T'ang period, which can be veritably described as 'Chinese Tanagra' – Chinese girls playing on musical instruments, king's officers [and] warriors: images of Buddha cast in bronze, in ancient and mediaeval China – of the Wei period, of the Ming period: ancient Greek vases, dishes and cups, with painting on them, and some of these were black-figured vases of ancient Greece with red background, giving the stories of the gods and of the heroes of the Greek epics in vigorous black brush work, and in some the figures were drawn in red on white ground.

All these objects were quite select ones, and genuine antiques. The green patina on the bronze figures formed an evidence of their antiquity. There were a few brasses from India, but they were not at all remarkable.

7. Photographs taken by Edmund Engelman in 1938 show that many of the objects in Freud's consulting room and study at that time had labels attached to them (e.g. Engelman, 1976: plates 14, 22, 30).
8. Michael Molnar informs me (pers. comm., 28/2/01) that his intention had not been to suggest any one-to-one cause and effect, being aware that not only had oriental antiquities probably become more available on the market in the 1930s, but that Freud had already bought a Buddha head as early as 1909.
9. It is not certain that this Osiris figure did ever reach Freud. Ferenczi wrote: 'Eine ägyptische Osiris-Figur, die ich hier auftrieb . . . kann ich Ihnen erst nach der Heimkehr aus Berlin überreichen lassen'. There does not seem to be any way of identifying whether this particular piece exists within Freud's existing collection of Osiris figures (Figure 10).
10. Which in itself is far from satisfactory, as can be seen, for example, from the fact that for five weeks in 2000, and again in 2001, Fortnum & Mason were legally selling 'authenticated' unprovenanced antiquities to the public at large (and see Ascherson, 2000), and archaeological material culture objects (no doubt, both genuine and forged) are currently advertised for sale in a variety of magazines and daily newspapers.
11. For example, the Egypt Exploration Society's aims included the donation of the previous year's discoveries of antiquities not only to institutions, but also to its supporters. Thus, the Report of its 1899–1900 18th Annual General Meeting records, 'The number of *ushabtis* brought home was so large that we are entitled for the first time to make presents of them to individual subscribers'. The next year, the Society warned such recipients that 'no one . . . is entitled to complain if in this or any other year the money value of the objects received appears to be less than the amount of the subscription. It is impossible to foresee what may be the harvest of antiquities that will be reaped in any one year . . . '.
12. Recently this approach has resulted in 'marks made by Freud subconsciously' revealed by 'photomicrography of the seat of Freud's chair' being immortalized by Cornelia Parker in a 1998/99 exhibition at the Science Museum (Figure 14).

Appendix: Objects that are perhaps most likely to have derived from Duna-Pentele

In Vienna

Clay Globular face-jug (Leupold-Löwenthal and Lobner, 1975: 369; Leupold-Löwenthal et al., 1995; Dolthofer, 1998: A-34) – red painted number 401 (and therefore [?] acquired by Freud pre-1914, see D'Agata, 1994: 20–1. See Figure 15).

Indented clay beaker (Leupold-Löwenthal and Lobner, 1975: 297; Leupold-Löwenthal et al., 1995: 263; Dolthofer, 1998: A-77) – red painted number 418 (and therefore [?] acquired by Freud pre-1914, see D'Agata, 1994: 20–1. See Figure 16).

Small clay pot (Leupold-Löwenthal and Lobner, 1975: 371; Leupold-Löwenthal et al., 1995; Dolthofer, 1998: A-36) – marked 'C' Dali m'; perhaps one of 'a few rather nice clay pots' (Brabant et al., 1992: 134–5).

Clay jug (Leupold-Löwenthal and Lobner, 1975: 372; Leupold-Löwenthal et al., 1995; Dolthofer, 1998: A-37) – possibly marked ‘C’ Dali m’. (Figure 17).

And perhaps

Clay cup (Dolthofer, 1998: A-31); perhaps one of ‘a few rather nice clay pots’ (Brabant et al., 1992: 134–5).

Small clay bowl (Dolthofer, 1998: A-65); perhaps one of ‘a few rather nice clay pots’ or the ‘little clay receptacle in which [some Duna-Pentele] beads [had] arrived’ (Brabant et al., 1992: 134–5, 151. See Figure 18).

In London

13 metal brooches of various types (Nos. 3320, 3393, 3403, 3423, 3448? 4701, 4704–8, 4710, 4713. See Figures 12 and 13).

6 metal bracelets of various types (Nos. 3500, 4679, 4697–9, 4700. See Figure 13).

Scabbard fitting (3410) (and see Brabant et al., 1992: 134–5 for the mention of the receipt of ‘a spear head’ which it has not been possible to trace).

Bronze spoon (No. 3458. See Figure 13).

Bone hair-pin with figured head (No. 3249. See Figure 13).

Metal ‘ear-scoop’ (No. 3296. see Figure 13).

3 Metal pins of various types (No. 3294. See Figure 13. Nos 4717–4718. See Figure 12).

Broken bone needle (No. 3445).

Broken bone ‘ear-scoop’ (No. 3298).

Bronze mirror ‘308’ (No. 4668. See Figure 19) and see Dorsey (1976: 32) for a strange incident when Freud allegedly gave him ‘a flat metal object with a handle, possibly of silver, that looked like a mirror, but it had no glass in it’.

Many types of glassware, presumably including what Ferenczi called ‘two so-so glass receptacles’ (Brabant et al., 1992: 151), and perhaps also including one, perhaps No. 3531 (Figure 11) about which Freud wrote that it was ‘a glass which produces a magical play of colours after being scratched in the appropriate spot. I wish you could have seen it’ (Brabant et al., 1992: 161).

Many (strings of) glass beads; one, acquired in 1910, being ‘supposedly from a Sarmatian grave in Duna Pentele, with interesting inlaid ornamentation’, and another, acquired at the same time, being a ‘(blue) piece of glass [which] is magnificently iridescent!’ (Brabant et al., 1992: 135, 144. See Figure 20).

Many clay lamps, some bought ‘at one gulden’, some ‘overpriced at 1 crown each, and some, out of a group of five, bearing ‘trademark’(s) –‘sexti’. (See Figure 21. Brabant et al., 1992: 140, 145, 147).



FIGURE 15 Clay face jug (No. A-34), possibly acquired by Freud before 1914

Photograph Freud Museum, Vienna



FIGURE 16 Indented clay beaker (No. A-77), possibly acquired by Freud before 1914

Photograph Freud Museum, Vienna



FIGURE 17 Clay jug (No. A-37)

Photograph Freud Museum, Vienna



FIGURE 18 Small clay bowl (No. A-65). Possibly the one in which glass beads were sent to Freud from Duna-Pentele

Photograph Freud Museum, Vienna



FIGURE 19 Bronze mirror (No. 4668), possibly acquired by Freud before 1914. Possibly the object used by Freud in his psychoanalytic sessions with John Dorsey

Photograph Stuart Laidlaw. Freud Museum, London



FIGURE 20 Glass bead necklace (No. 4046). Possibly the one whose 'magnificent iridescence' was especially noted by Freud

Photograph Stuart Laidlaw. Freud Museum, London

FIGURE 21 Clay lamp (No. 4327) with a 'trademark' of the kind mentioned by Freud in his correspondence

Photograph Stuart Laidlaw. Freud Museum, London



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